

THE ASYLUM

Quarterly Journal of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society

Volume III, No. 2

Summer, 1985

Inside:

DAVID BLOCK helps to 'clear the air' surrounding Napoleon Bonaparte's 'numismatic life', as he examines fact, fiction, incompetence and plagiarism in some of the many books written about this controversial figure, on . . . page 5

WONDERING ABOUT the NBS election results? See . . . page 7

THE RESULTS of Wilson's recent sale are on . . . page 11

AND KOLBE'S report begins on page 18

BEEN LOOKING for an NBS membership list? Try . . . page 13

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THE ASYLM

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Editor Carling Gresham

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From the President...

Happy Birthday, Happy Birthday to Us!

For the seventh consecutive year, the Numismatic Bibliomania Society will again gather for its annual membership meeting during the ANA Convention. This year's affair, to be held in Baltimore, will occur at 8 p.m. on Wednesday evening, 21 August.

It seems impossible that seven years have passed since that first small dinner meeting in St. Louis, when approximately a dozen "book nutz" decided the time was right to form an organization for numismatic book collectors.

Following nearly a year of 'labor pains,' the first issue of The Asylum was released in the early summer of 1980. The preface to Vol. I, No. 1, stated, in part, "The purpose will be several fold: We will, hopefully, enlighten, inform, and entertain. This will be an open forum for new information and research on numismatic literature. We welcome any articles or newsworthy items from any of you who would care to share them with our readers."

The first few issues of the journal did, indeed, contain numerous entertaining and scholarly monographs. But by the end of the first volume, in the summer of 1981, the flow of articles had dwindled con-

siderably. As a result, it took us more than two years ...from Spring, 1982, until Fall, 1984... to complete volume II. And this was accomplished only through the untiring efforts of our new editor Carling Gresham, who managed to emit two issues in a four month period last year. The present number marks the fourth issue published under Carling's direction, and is noteworthy due to the fact that they've been published in a period of 12 months.

But, dear reader, all is not well. Our overall membership is down, and the editorial contributions are virtually non-existent. In short, we need your help! As I've stated before, The Asylum is your journal, and it'll be only as good as you make it.

I realize that not everyone is a writer, but looking over our current membership list, it's apparent that we're blessed to have some of the finest numismatic scholars of our generation among our number. >

IN MEMORIAM

Howard W. A. Linecar

1912-1985

Humanitarian, Bookman,
Editor, Author, Friend

President...

Certainly, the fact that the NBS was dormant for more than a year contributed to the decline in membership; but, once we got back on track, issues of The Asylum were mailed regularly to virtually all members, past and present. It's shocking to me that so few ex-members elected to reinstate their belief in, and support of, the organization.

The last time I checked, I noted that Coin World had about 80,000 subscribers. Presumably, at least half of those hobbyists can read; being even more presumptuous, odds are that at least 10 percent of the remaining group actually has a serious interest in numismatics. So, if we accept that there are no less than 4,000 collectors out there who can both read, and are genuinely involved with the hobby, why can't we locate more than 200 members?

Being a relatively young and small organization, we're not blessed with a wealth of funds. Ergo, our ability to advertise for new members is greatly restricted. However, our ability to communicate orally (and freely,) presents each of us with the opportunity to 'spread the word.' All of us know collectors who study their specialties, and a few well-chosen comments laid at their door-

The Asylum



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the
Numismatic
Bibliomania Society

8 p.m., 21 August
Baltimore

(Exact site to be announced
at the ANA Convention.)

steps could not fail to encourage many of those individuals to join the fold.

Random House's College Dictionary defines 'apathy' as "Lack of interest or concern," (Definition 2.) In many instances, apathy can be as destructive as fire, flood or famine. Most assuredly, it has been the major cause of the deaths of thousands of organizations throughout the ages. Let's not let it be the cause of our 'death.' Give a damn!

And, while you're at it, dust off the old typewriter and be creative. We're not asking for Hemingway or Melville; send it broken... Carling will fix it.

On to Baltimore!

Napoleonic Medal Books Have Problems

By David Block
Gainesville, Fla.
(Copyright, 1985)

Napoleon, as with Shakespeare, has been the subject of many arguments; sources for the latter are few, leaving great space for conjecture. The sources for Napoleon are so many that even as industrious a team as Ariel and Will Durant could not be familiar with enough of them to divine the truth concealed under a mountainous literature.

Few biographers have the ability to synthesize a man from what has been written about him, and when the best anecdotes about a historical figure have been written for ulterior purposes, to discount what has been written. Most of the memoirs written by Napoleon's contemporaries had as their objectives to curry favor with either the royalists or the imperialists; neither side had as its main purpose to depict Napoleon as he was.

In one way or another this dichotomy has continued; George Will considers Napoleon to have been the most hateful tyrant who ever lived, which suggests that Will has never read Procopius' account of the Emperor Justinian.

Weider and Hapgood, who write so imaginatively about Napoleon's murder, pin the murder on a man they call "...a general of Louis XVIII," with no apparent knowledge that the man was a protege of Napoleon; one who was given lessons in mathematics by Napoleon on Corsica before the revolution, served in Napoleon's armies, was created a count by Napoleon in 1810, and was made a general by him in 1811.

Certainly Napoleon himself did little to reveal the true man. He attempted to suppress his earliest publication, and he avoided discussions of his earlier public life.

A large gap in our knowledge of his activities occurs during the reign of Robespierre, a period during which, in all likelihood, Fouche acquired the information which enabled him to confront Napoleon, even treasonously to propose in 1810 that the United Kingdom and France might make peace, perhaps even if it meant discarding Napoleon. (Rose, Life of Napoleon, v.2, p.196.)

One of the indisputable facts we have about Napo-

Block...

leon is that he had issued a series of medals commemorating notable events of his reign. But even this series of medals has its problems.

When Louis XVIII began the part of his reign during which he ruled, it was decided that a damnatio memoriae be performed... that Napoleon had never existed. Consequently, the Medal Mint list published in 1818 proceeds from the medals of Louis XVI to those of Louis XVIII without mentioning the hundreds minted for Napoleon.

To add insult to injury, three neutral medals of Napoleon, Reestablishment of the Medal Mint, Homage to Hayden, and the Monument to Joan of Arc are credited to Louis XVIII!

Although a catalog of medals of the French Revolution had been published in 1806 by Millin, Keeper of Coins and Medals at the French Library, the first catalog of Napoleonic medals was published in England in 1818. The author, Captain J.C. Laskey, based his book on what he calls, "The French Medal Mint List," a copy of which he gives.

The list includes 141 medals and apparently represents all of the Napoleonic medals of which copies were for sale at the Medal Mint in 1815, before Napoleon

was erased from the books. Laskey furnishes extensive background information on nearly all of the medals listed.

Some copies of the book, perhaps the entire edition, were printed on large paper, illustrated only with culls-de-lampe, engraved in the style of Bewick.

Several other catalogs of Napoleonic medals appeared soon after Laskey's. Ann Mudie Scargill wrote a book titled (probably by the printer,) Medallic history of Napoleon Bonaparte, translated by Miss Ann Mudie Scargill, from the original manuscript, intended to have been published by the late government of France, 1820.

Scargill's introduction contains some interesting remarks about the status of medal production in Great Britain in 1820, but the book is a cheat, having no connection with any French manuscript, and is replete with typographic and factual errors; it adds nothing to Laskey except for a description of a medal that never existed.

Worse, the book appeared after Millingen's Metallic history of Napoleon, the first part of which appeared in 1819. Millingen's book is, as he explained, composed from the plates and manuscript prepared by Millin for a continuation of his Metallic history of >

Kolbe New Society President

NBS election results are:

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the French revolution, mentioned above.

Millin's work covered the period from the revolution to 1806; Millingen extended the book to the exile of Napoleon in 1815. This is the first illustrated catalog of Napoleonic medals. The accuracy of most of the engravings leaves much to be desired, but the notes are important.

The book was published in two versions, one in English and one in French. The translation is done so well that it's impossible to separate Millin's words from Millingen's, which makes it difficult to decide whether some remarks are an eye-witness account or an editor's opinion.

The definitive illustrated catalog of the medals of the French revolution was created by Michel D. Hennin, whose researches are displayed in a scholarly and comprehensive text,

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Officers and board members will be installed at the next general meeting of the Society, during the ANA Convention in Baltimore.

(NB: Remy Bourne declined the office of president; G. Frederick Kolbe was elected as a result of a 'write-in' vote.-Ed.)

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illustrated by excellent engravings. Histoire numismatique de la Revolution fran aise was published in Paris in 1826; it remains the only catalog which contains practically all of the early Napoleonic medals.

In 1828 Bigi began selling casts of the Napoleonic medals, an enterprise which proved to be financially rewarding since the medals were no longer being struck in France. He published a catalog of the medals he reproduced, which claimed to contain notes by Denon, the man who directed the creation of the medals. But the notes were copied verbatim from Millingen's book, so they're plagiarisms falsely attributed, and of no independent value.

The Medal Mint was selling Napoleonic medals again

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Block...

after the revolution of 1830. The status of the medals in 1833 is shown by the Medal Mint catalog of that date. It was originally intended that the catalog be an inventory of all the punches, hubs, and dies that the Mint possessed, but the published part includes only the dies.

By that time the Mint had dies for about 500 Napoleonic medals. Some of the dies are marked as being privately owned, their use being subject to payment of a royalty to the owners. It seems that the French Mint was partially private enterprise, as was the U.S. Mint at the same time.

The great illustrated catalogs of Napoleonic medals are part of Charles Lenormant's, et al, Tresor de numismatique et glyptique, an expensive and obsolete publication. This series replaced the old engraved illustrations by a new process whereby the plates were prepared mechanically directly from casts of the medals.

The volume containing medals of the French revolution first appeared in 1836, followed several years later by a volume covering the First Empire. The text in these volumes doesn't reach Hennin's standards, but the editors

published for the first time many medals from imperial times.

In the 19th century John Sainsbury was probably the most important collector of Napoleonic relics; he published the catalog of his collection in 1845. He reports with relish that when Joseph Bonaparte was examining the collection, he frequently exclaimed, "How on earth did you get this?"

The section devoted to "State papers and manuscripts," 3540 of them, is impressive, but the listing of his medals, 498, is of little consequence, however, number 101, a copy of Dux tutus ab insidiis in silver, was "given him by his friend, the late Mr. Barry O'Meara, to whom this Medal was given by the Emperor at St. Helena."

The definitive catalog for the medals issued while Napoleon was ruling France is that of Ludwig Bramsen. The catalog is an unillustrated listing with brief comments, of more than 2300 pieces; if a dealer offers a medal "not in Bramsen," then that medal is most probably one that should not be in Bramsen!

Bramsen's catalog, Le medaillier de Napoleon le Grand, was published in three parts, in 1904, 1907 and 1913. He paid the printer for only 400 copies, but it's likely that the printer made another 400 copies

Bergman Sale Features Bargains

John F. Bergman conducted a numismatic literature mail bid sale which closed on 27 April 1985. Material in the sale was 90 percent from Bergman's stock, and consisted almost entirely of works on U.S. numismatics, 20th Century auction catalogs accounting for 600 of the 828-lot sale.

The major difference between this and other literature sales is to be found in item 3 of the Terms of Sale, which reads: "lots will be awarded at a 10% increase over the next highest bid. If there are no other bids, the lot will be awarded at 50% of esti-

mate." Most auction houses reduce bids, however, none specify exactly to what level the reductions will be made.

Bergman's theory is that if there is but one bid on a lot, regardless of how high the bid might be, there exists only a very slight demand, therefore, the lot should sell cheaply; the 50% figure was chosen arbitrarily as the fairest for both consignors and bidders. The opposite must hold true, also; if two or more bidders are willing to pay dearly for a lot, then the lot should bring a good price.

In practise the first part of the theory prevailed in this sale, as most of the material was common to slightly scarce. Most of the ANA sales were bid at estimate without competition, hence, they sold for half the estimate. This was generally true for the New Netherlands, Kreisberg, and Numismatic Gallery sales.

Bowers & Ruddy catalogs led the demand, followed by Stack's issues. Virtually all of the B & R catalogs described, "as new," were available in multiples, therefore, prices realized are not indicative of the actual demand, most bringing a modest \$5 to \$6.

Lot 104, the Stafford Collection catalog, brought

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for his own account as the catalog is not uncommon.

Bramsen attempted to cover the period from the day Napoleon overthrew the Directorate, 9 November 1799, to 1869. He explained that the earlier period already had been well done by Hennin, so he chose to begin where Hennin left off, basing his work on the Tresor volumes; he supplemented it with pieces which had been overlooked, and added medals from foreign countries which were related to Napoleon or to events of his reign. Bramsen asterisked the catalog entries he owned and remarked that the numbers without aster-

Bergman...

bids of \$25, \$25, \$16, \$15 and \$15; the four copies in stock were sold for the fourth highest bid, \$15. If only one copy had been available, the lot would have been sold for \$25. Prices realized for the Stack catalogs were more indicative of their actual value for there were only a few multiples available.

Some highlights of the sale are: a complete set of Bowers & Ruddy/Bowers & Merena catalogs, which brought \$357.50 against an estimate of \$350. An Arrangement of United States Copper Cents, 1816-1857, by Frank Andrews, fetched \$125 (half of estimate,) on a \$200 bid.

Eckfeldt & DuBois' New Varieties of Gold and Silver Coins...1850, with a sample of California gold, realized \$936 on a top bid of \$1200. One of the best performers against estimate was a complete set of Empire Review by Bowers & Ruddy, which brought \$130 against a \$75 estimate.

The prices realized list has been sent to all bidders and consignors; others may receive the PRL by forwarding a SASE to John F. Bergman, 4223 Iroquois Ave. Lakewood, CA 90713. Bergman also is accepting consignments for his next sale. □

Block...

isks could be considered as rare. Bramsen's collection was sold in toto to Dr. Paul Julius.

Three outstanding collections of Napoleonic medals have been sold at auction. The first belonged to the Prince d'Essling, the second to Dr. Julius, and the third to Prince Napoleon. The last was a unique event as it dispersed the copies of the medals struck in gold for Napoleon I.

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LASKEY, Capt. J.C. A description of the series of medals struck at the National Medal Mint... London, H.R. Young, 1818. Quatro, xiv, 240pp.

MILLIN, A.L. and MILLINGEN, J. (ed.) Medallic History of Napoleon, 1796-1815. London, the Editor, 1819. Quatro, viii, 120pp. Supplement. London, 1821. 42pp, 74pls.

SCARGILL, Ann Mudie. Medallic History of Napoleon Bonaparte, translated by... "The Proprietor," London, 1820. Octavo, xvi, 182pp. >

Auction Catalogs Popular in Sale

California numismatic book dealer and publisher, Cal Wilson, reports that modern auction catalogs and early volumes of The Numismatist were among the most popular items offered in his eleventh mail bid sale, which closed on 25 May.

The auction catalogs issued by Stack's in the 1930s and 1940s led the way among modern offerings, with the catalog of the 1939 ANA Convention sale commanding \$88 against an estimate of \$50. The 1940 ANA sale, also conducted by Stack's, brought \$83.60 against an estimate of \$55.

Other early catalogs

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ANON. Collection de medailles des campagnes et du regne l'empereur Napoleon.
Paris, chez Ch. Bigi, 1828.
Octavo, 16pp.

PARIS Musee Monetaire. Catalogue des poincons, coins et medailles du Musee...
Paris, de la Forest, 1833.
12mo, 522pp.

LENORMANT, C., et al, eds. Tresor de numismatique et de glyptique... Paris, Au Bureau du tresor, etc.
1836. (20vols, 1834-1858.)
This vol., folio, 140pp,
96pls. (Note: All Tresor vols. should be inspected for completeness.)

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from the same firm included the sales of 16-17 Sep. 1938, at \$71.50; 3-4 Jun. 1939, \$77; 21-22 Jul. 1939, \$66; 26 Aug. 1939, \$72.20; 25 Nov. 1939, \$50.60; 15 Dec. 1939, \$50.50; and the sales of 30-31 Oct. 1942, and 27 Mar. 1943, \$44 each.

The 15 Feb. 1975 Pine Tree auction of the Early American Coppers Society brought \$66. An original plated copy of the New York Coin & Stamp Co. catalog of the Lorin G. Parmelee sale brought \$385.

According to Wilson, the highlight of the sale was the strength of prices for early volumes of The Numismatist. Most of the pieces originated from a hoard once owned by Farran Zerbe, and were remarkable for their fine state of preservation.

The 1894 volume brought \$192.50, and the 1895 went for \$159.50. The 1896 sold at \$126.50, and the 1897, '98 and '99 volumes sold for \$111.10 each; the 1903 went for \$104.50, while the 1905 and '06 sold at \$89.10 each. Other early volumes sold in the range of \$35 to \$70.

Offered in the sale were more than 400 lots of price lists and auction catalogs from the 1950s through the 1980s. Prices for these lots ranged from only a dollar to perhaps \$10, but >

Wilson...

most were bought by an eager audience, Wilson reported.

He said, "Most numismatic literature dealers are reluctant to list these low priced modern catalogs individually, as the return (price) is generally quite poor.

"However, I receive numerous inquiries from collectors seeking many of these same catalogs, and I recognize that not all hobbyists are interested in collecting the high priced rare items, but would prefer to obtain the moderate-

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EDWARDS, Edward. The Napoleon medals: a complete... London, ??, 1837. Folio, 170pp, 40pls. (The first half of the English translation of the French Tresor volume covering medals of the Emperor.)

SAINSBURY, John. The Napoleon Museum. The history of France illustrated from Louis XIV to... London, ??, MDCCCLXV. Imperial quarto, ii, 692pp, 40pls.

BRAMSEN, L. Medaillier de Napoleon le Grand. Paris, Alphonse Picard & Fils, 1904, 1907, 1913. Large octavo. 3vols: x, 152pp (xxx); iv, 132pp, (xxviii); (2), 112pp, (xxx), (20).

ly priced modern publications, which, quite frankly, are usually loaded with important information and high quality illustrations. I feel that the strong response for these pieces in this sale reflects that attitude," Wilson closed.

Copies of the catalog may be obtained from Wilson at 38228 Glenmoor Dr., Fremont, CA 94536. The cost is \$5 and includes the prices realized list. ☐

A BAD book is as much of a labor to write as a good one; it comes as sincerely from the author's soul.

Aldous Huxley

ESSLING, Victor, prince d'. Importante collection de monnaies et medailles, Consulat et Empire Napoleon Ier-Napoleon III. Paris, Feuardent & Florange, 1927. Octavo, 3057 lots, xvi, 246pp, 68 unbound pls.

JULIUS, Paul. Franzosiche Revolution, Napoleon I und seine Zeit. Medaillen... Munich, Helbing, 1932. Large octavo, 4355 lots, vi, 264pp, 58pls. The sale did not take place; the collection was sold in 1959.

NAPOLEON, Prince. Monnaies et medailles napoleoniennes 2e partie... Zurich, Bank Leu, 1975. 64pp, 6pls. (The first part was devoted to coins and medals of Napoleon's relatives.) ☐

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10	14.50	22.00	19.50	24.25	26.50	20.50
11	16.50	24.00	22.00	26.50	29.00	23.00
12	19.00	26.50	24.50	29.00	33.00	25.00
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Meghrig Compiles Asylum Index

By Alan Meghrig
Laguna Hills, CA

The Asylum, the quarterly journal of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society, definitely has been much of its title, and little of its subtitle until recently!

Up to this time, yearly dues have been understood to entitle members to four issues, regardless of how long it took to publish. Some members have paid every year, and those payments have been recorded.

Hopefully, we're now on a steady schedule, but please be patient; we're still smoothing-out processing steps for the handling of all phases of publication

and distribution.

For all non-editorial problems, contact me, for I keep ALL primary records... payments, (dues and ads,) membership status, fulfillment, and back issues (Xerox if out of print.) The mail labels are generated from these records just prior to printing and distribution.

NOW is the time for members to check their library records for missing issues. There's no charge for issues missing from those years you've been a member; in the next issue we'll publish prices for copying issues that you might need.

AUTHOR/ARTICLE INDEX

Vol. I, No. 1. Summer, 1980. 16pp, quantity unknown.

- p3 ADAMS, John W. Rarity and Value of Large Cent Literature
- p5 KOLBE, G.F. Photographic Illustrations in Numismatic Literature
- p9 COLLINS, Jack. Bookshelf Bibliomania
- p10 BOWERS, Q. David. Try Collecting Catalogs
- p12 KOLBE, G.F. An American Classic

Vol. I, Nos. 2-3. Fall-Winter, 1980. 32pp, quantity ?

- p17 Bibliomania Meeting at Cincinnati ANA
- p27 ADAMS, John W. Woodward vs. Frossard
- p33 BREEN, Walter H. A Review of Half Cent Literature
- p38 Auction Catalogs Dominate Katen Delaware Sale

Vol. I, No. 4. Summer, 1981. 24pp, quantity unknown.

- p49 Conclusion of Talk by 'Leather Freak' John J. Ford Jr., at ANA
- p59 COLLINS, Jack. Bibliomania Bid Battle for Books
- p63 DANIEL, Forrest W. The Incomplete Collector
- p64 SZEGO, Alfred. The Reprint - Don't Knock it

Vol. II, No. 1. Spring, 1982. 16pp, quantity unknown.

p1 WESTER, Robert J. The Crosbys of Charlestown, New Hampshire

p5 NEWMAN, Eric P. Sylvester S. Crosby's Heliotype Illustrations

p7 CARTER, Mike. Rare Gilhousen Work Discovered

p9 BROWN, Kirby. The Origin of the Coin Plates in American Bond Detector

p11 'J. M.' Critic's Corner

Vol. II, No. 2. Spring, 1983. 16pp, quantity unknown.

p18 NBS; Proposed By-laws

p20 MEGHRIG, Alan. Perturbations #1 - Newlin's Half Dime Work

p22 JORDAN, Reinhold. German Numismatic Bibliomaniacs

p24 BOURNE, Remy. Did You Know?

p25 First Kolbe/Spink Sale

p26 Classics Sell Well in Wilson Sale

p28 Erratas (Sic) and Such

p29 ADAMS, John W. U.S. Numismatic Literature Vol. II

(Henceforth, each issue begins with page "1".)

Vol. II, No. 3. Summer, 1984. 20pp, 1,000 printed.

p3 WILSON, Cal. NBS Alive, Doing Well

p4 JORDAN, Reinhold. New Bibliography from East Germany

p5 BROWN, Kirby W. A Study of Embossed Coin Books

p12 CARTER, Mike. Mystery Book Reveals Some Secrets

p14 HOMREN, Wayne K. Searching for Elusive Coin Books

Vol. II, No. 4. Fall, 1984. 36pp, 400 printed.

p3 WILSON, Cal. Election Time! Call for Nominations

p5 OROSZ, Joel J. Preservation of Leather and Paper, or, What to do Before Decay 'Kills' Your Books

p15 BERESINER, Yasha. Dealer Sees Market Upswing

p18 BROWN, Kirby. Author Concludes Study of Embossed Coin Books

p27 WILSON, Cal. About Those ANA Auction Catalogs

Vol. III, No. 1. Spring, 1985. 28pp, 350 printed.

p3 WILSON, Cal. Book 'Doctor' Arrives from England

p4 WESTER, Robert. Engraving Art, Science in Book

p9 SULLIVAN, Michael. 'Trial List' of ANA Auction Catalogs

p14 OROSZ, Joel J. 'ICU Doctor' Continues Advice

p21 KOLBE, George F. Dealer Welcomes New Bibliography

Coast Auction Exceeds Estimate by 10%

By G. Frederick Kolbe
Crestline, CA

The first mail and public auction of numismatic books held in our new offices in Crestline, CA, was a resounding success. The estimated price of the 1609 lots in the sale, our 21st, was \$117,000, but the books sold for \$126,000, or nearly 10 per cent more than the estimate; with the 10 per cent buyer's premium, the sale totalled almost \$140,000.

Some of the highlights of the sale (prices include the buyer's premium,) are: Attinelli's rare 1876 work on early U.S. auction catalogs, \$440; Abe Kosoff's heavily annotated copy of the 1954 King Farouk sale, \$1127 on a \$750 estimate; Sylvester Crosby's 1875 classic, The Early Coins of America, reached \$522; a long run of U.S. Mint reports brought \$550.

The famous 1881 Maris elephant folio on the coins of New Jersey was won at \$907; his 1869 work on 1794 cents, the first book written on large cents, sold for \$1430; a copy of Adams' and Woodin's pioneer 1913 work on U.S. patterns realized \$715; a deluxe, leatherbound copy of B. Max Mehl's copy of the French collection of large cents,

estimated at \$350, realized \$632 after heavy floor bidding.

A collection of more than 200 photographs of minor U.S. patterns, possibly photographed by Edgar Adams, sold at \$660; the keystone of American numismatic literature, a set of The American Journal of Numismatics, started at \$2800, and, after heavy bidding was taken by a telephone bidder at \$4950.

Plated Chapman sales, with few exceptions, sold very well: a waterstained 1882 Bushnell, \$1072; 1884 Warner, \$440; 1890 Cleneay, \$522; 1895 Winsor, \$605; three 1904 Mills sales went for \$935, \$330 and \$302; a 1907 Stickney sold at \$687; a 1909 Zabriskie was claimed for \$1650; a 1909 Jewett reached \$825; a 1911 Baldwin went at \$312; a 1911 Brown realized \$522; a 1912 Earle sold for \$1045; 1913 Sargent reached \$577; 1913 Lyman saw \$935; a 1918 Jackman went at \$962, and a 1921 Jenks was hammered down for \$1430.

B. Max Mehl's personal copy of the 1929 Lawrence sale of pioneer gold, with all 22 photographic plates, realized \$990. A long run of Frossard sales generally,

Book 'Medicare' Course Ends

By Joel Orosz
Kalamazoo, Mich.

(This is the third part of Orosz' article; the other two parts appeared in the two previous editions of The Asylum.-Ed.)

Paper, whether acid-damaged or not, is susceptible to tears and cuts. In both cases, they can be repaired almost invisibly. You will need to purchase methyl cellulose, a product which is in essence nothing more than powdered paper.

Wash a jar thoroughly with a mild soap, such as Ivory, and rinse repeatedly

Kolbe...

sold for very good prices. A group of 18 William Hesslein sales, estimated at \$75, sold for \$264. The original photographic plates of the Schwartz and Sloss sales, conducted by Abe Kosoff, sold for \$715 each. A nearly complete run of Lyman Low catalogs sold for \$990 on an estimate of \$500.

Early Max Mehl catalogs sold very well, but later sales were weak. A deluxe copy of Mehl's famous 1941 Dunham sale, bound in full leather with photographic illustrations, brought \$1100 on a \$750 estimate. A seldom offered group of the

with distilled water. Pour in a teaspoon of methyl cellulose, then very slowly add distilled water, a bit at a time, and stir with a clean swizzle stick. (Clean plastic coffee stirrers will do, also.) The ideal consistency is "too thick to drink and too thin to plow," or, about as thick as you can make it, and still have it pour. The less water you use, the better, for excess water will tend to cockle the paper.

Now, examine the tear; if it's a normal one, it'll be jagged, and have fibers protruding from both sides. Tease these fibers straight out with a small, dry paintbrush. Now dip another small paintbrush lightly into the methyl cellulose, remembering not to get too much at any given time. Touch it lightly to the fibers on both sides, replenishing the brush as necessary. Don't put on too much!

Gently work the tear back together with your fingers. You'll see that it ripped in a pattern, and that it'll go back in that same pattern. You may nudge it gently with your fingers (be sure your hands are clean,) to get it back into,

Kolbe...

first 23 Michael catalogs, estimated at \$75, sold for \$385. An exceptionally nice copy of the 1890 Parmelee sale with original plates went for \$1045.

The rare 1917 ANA sale catalog, issued by Wayte Raymond, sold for \$396 on an estimate of \$100, doubtless a record for an ANA catalog. The rare 1874 Strobridge sale of the Commodore Middleton collection, with two photographic plates of ancient coins, sold for \$687 on a \$250 estimate.

The 1909 Hirsch sale of the Weber collection of Roman and Byzantine coins sold for \$264. Numismatic Chronicle single volumes from the 1920s mostly sold over estimates. The first ten volumes of the Journal International d'Archeologie Numismatique, unbound but nearly complete, sold for \$550.

The Numismatic Circular, complete from 1892 to 1939, sold for \$880 on a \$750 estimate. The rare Brethes work on Moroccan coins sold for \$300 more than its estimate of \$250. Walker's book on Arab-Byzantine coins sold for \$330 and \$302, there being two copies in the sale. Poole's classic 1887 British Museum treatise on Persian coins realized \$209. Three sales of Russian coins, catalogued by

Rudolph Kube, Berlin, 1909 to 1912, sold for between \$121 and \$132 each.

A typewritten list of the Michailovitch collection of medals and decorations, prepared by Abe Kosoff, sparked intense bidding, and sold for \$770 on a much higher mail bid.

Copies of the catalog and PRL are available at the post-sale price of \$25; the PRL, alone, is \$5.

Our next public auction, in association with Spink & Son, Ltd., London, will be held in New York City at the Sheraton Centre Hotel, in conjunction with the New York International Numismatic Convention.

Orosz...

shape.

When you've completed that, dab at the repaired area with a clean cloth to absorb any excess methyl cellulose, then place a piece of waxed paper over and under the torn page, close the book, and put a weight on it. If you've followed all directions, the tear will be virtually invisible, and fully repaired when it dries.

Cuts made by scissors, razors or knives are a "different animal altogether." They are straight, without any protruding fibers to aid in repair. Here, the trick is to use methyl cellulose and Japanese paper >

Orosz...

to effect the repair.

Japanese paper is a generic name for dozens of varieties of lightweight, fibrous, acid-free and very strong papers originally made only in Japan, but now made in the West as well.

There're about 25 to 30 varieties useful for assorted conservation applications; usually, museum supply company catalogs contain tables listing them and their relative uses. The type used most frequently for repairing acid-damaged (yellowed,) papers is Uda Thin. The repair itself is simple in concept, but somewhat delicate in execution.

First, you must put an ever-so-thin bead of methyl cellulose along the edge of each side of the cut, and then carefully place it back together. Next, slip a piece of waxed paper under the piece you're repairing; paint a very thin bead of methyl cellulose over the cut, so there's a little bead on both sides. Now, take a piece of Japanese paper, place it on top of the cut, then gently apply pressure to it.

Now comes the hard part. You must let it dry long enough to stick to the fibers, but not long enough to make a firm bond. If you applied the methyl cellulose sparingly as directed,

about two to three minutes should do it; allow two or three minutes longer if you put on too much by mistake. You may wish to experiment first on a piece of scrap paper.

At the critical moment, gently pull the paper upwards, starting at the end of the cut and working back toward the edge. If possible, support the document by pressing down with your fingers on both sides of the cut. Several of the fibers should pull off of the Japanese paper and stick to the page, thus mending the cut. If not, let dry for a few minutes longer and try again.

For maximum protection, perform the same procedures on the other side of the paper. Allow to dry for four to six hours interleaved in wax paper, with a small weight on top to prevent cockling.

If a chunk has been torn out of your page, and that chunk is missing, you may want to patch in a piece of Japanese paper to prevent further damage. Simply cut a piece of Japanese paper to the exact shape of the ripped area, and the exact size as well, except to overlap the damaged area uniformly by 1/8 inch.

Paint a small bead of methyl cellulose on the jagged area, and lay the patch over it. Allow to dry for four to six hours inter-

Orosz...

leaved with waxed paper with a small weight on top.

If the entire document is crumbling, Japanese paper and methyl cellulose are not enough; you'll need to either encapsulate or laminate. Encapsulation is generally better because it's the most easily reversible, but lamination is sometimes preferable.

Encapsulation is a process developed by the Library of Congress for document preservation. For this you'll need a grid (several pages of graph paper taped together will do;) a small weight; two sheets of Mylar (an inert form of polyester;) archival double-coated tape; and a small squeegee.

First, cut two pieces of Mylar approximately two inches longer and wider than the document to be encapsulated. Place one sheet on the grid, lining up the edges with the grid lines. Now, wipe the film with a soft, lint-free cloth to remove dust, and to create a static charge.

Center the document on the film. The static charge will help to hold it in position, but put the weight on top to be sure. Place a strip of double-coated tape on the film, all the way around the document, leaving a 1/4 inch margin between the tape and

the document.

Two important notes: First, be sure to leave a small gap between every piece of tape! In other words, you should use only four pieces of tape, and at every corner you should leave a gap of 1/16 to 1/32 of an inch. This will allow the atmosphere inside to equalize with the outside atmosphere; in effect it allows the document to "breathe."

Second, do not take off the paper coating for the second side yet! When you have taped all around satisfactorily, press down so that adhesion is complete.

Now, remove the weight from the document, place the second piece of film over the first piece (and over the document!) and carefully squeegee the two together to expel the excess air. After completing this, place the weight on the center of the top piece of film.

Then, starting at the top, peel back the film far enough so that you can peel off the paper on the tape. Then force the Mylar back down to complete the adhesion. Proceed with each side in turn, using the squeegee along the way to make sure that there're no gaps, and that as much air as possible is forced out.

Be especially careful on the last side. When this is completed, remove the >



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Orosz...

weight, trim each side to within 1/4 inch of the tape and be sure to round off the corners! Sharp Mylar corners slice through paper and even skin with ease! The finished product should be stored flat.

Encapsulation is only good for single sheets. However, if you want to put back together a few pages of a disbound book before you send it to the binder, lamination is your only hope.

Here, I must admit, I run into an embarrassing gap in my knowledge, having never laminated anything. I have, though, examined well-laminated sheets, including several that have been bound, and I can tell you that they're unobtrusive, and immeasurably strengthen a page.

Lamination is simply a process of forcing by heat a plastic or resin into the surface of the paper. The best by reputation is the Crompton Heat-Set Tissue, which has withstood simulated-aging tests for 170

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years, and which is completely soluble in ethanol or acetone. (Use ethanol as it's safer!)

If you order any Crompton's, they'll send you complete instructions, but my hunch is that all you'll need is several sheets of Heat-Set Tissue, a few pieces of waxed paper, and a tacking iron. Unless you're instructed to the contrary, don't let the temperature of the iron exceed 200 degrees F. Above that point, exposure of paper even for a short time can cause scorching.

The last consideration is storage. Most books, of course, are stored on bookshelves; if so, take care to dust the tops at least once a year, for particles of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide latch onto the dust particles, and invade the top edges of your books.

Naturally, now you'll be certain that your books are stored in the proper atmosphere, away from ultraviolet radiation. Small catalogs, periodicals and pamphlets

Orosz...

phlets may be stored profitably in acid-free, lignin-free boxes put out by a number of companies, and can be divided within by a number of acid-free, lignin-free folders and envelopes, and by polyethylene bags, which are inert, dust- and waterproof.

Don't overlook the dangers of mechanical damage caused by removing an replacing books on shelves. Rare book phase boxes can be made to order, or self-assembled to fit any book. These are especially recommended for soft-covered catalogs. My mint Dunham is in one, and I've been thankful the several times that I've bumped the next shelf up when replacing it.

These boxes will protect books from dust and light, but they aren't dustproof or lightproof. Dust jacket protectors are also a sensible investment. Phase boxes do require some patience to assemble, but they're not too difficult to do.

First, you must measure the book you wish to box-up. Let's assume that it's a fat book, nine inches tall, six inches wide, and two inches thick.

The box will be made from two pieces of lignin-free, acid-free board that will be shipped to you knocked-down; you'll have to fold both of them in

order to construct the box. Several sizes are available but the two you'll need will be determined by the height and width of the book. The formula for arriving at them is as follows:

First, for board "A;"
(Height") X 2(width") +
2(thick") + 3", so, in
our example:

(9") X 2(6") + 2(2") +
3", or,
9" X 12" + 4" + 3", or,
9" X 19"

Then, for board "B;"
(Width") X 2(Height") +
2(thick") + 3", so, in
our example:

(6") X 2(9") + 2(2") +
3", or,
6" X 18" + 4" + 3", or,
6" X 25"

Now consult the catalog, and order the two sizes that most closely match your numbers without being smaller. The boards aren't difficult to fold; they're scored at 1/4 inch intervals, which makes it easy to fold them where needed. By the way, each comes with a Velcro holder-fastener.

Always begin with board "A;" lay it on a flat surface with the scored side up. Using our hypothetical book, measure three inches from the left side of the board and fold up that segment to a 90 degree angle; this will provide the necessary overlap. Then measure two inches from that fold,

Orosz...

and fold up there, also to a 90 degree angle; this will accommodate the thickness of the book.

Then measure six inches from the last fold, and fold up 90 degrees for the width of the book; measure another two inches and fold up 90 degrees for the thickness of the other side of the book. Now the board should be exactly long enough to cover the width of the other side of the book, and tuck nicely under the three-inch overlap. If it doesn't, you must trim it to size; if it's too short, you're out of luck!

Finally, take out the Velcro fasteners and fasten the "hooks" piece and the "loops" piece together. Take the paper off of the "loops" (fuzzy) one, and carefully position it on the box under the edge of the overlap. When you're sure you have it right, push down on it to secure it. Since it's now where it'll be forever, take off the paper from the "hooks" (non-fuzzy) piece, and bring down the overlap on it and press hard. The Velcro fasteners now should be mated perfectly, exactly where you want them; separate, and remate to make sure.

At last, board "A" is ready to be wrapped around your book; after you've

done that, only the top and bottom edges will be exposed. Now, construct board "B" in the same manner, but remember to substitute "height" for "width." Finally, you'll be able to cover both top and bottom of your book, and your phase box will be complete.

A storage warning: if you're lucky enough to own old photographic plates or negatives, do not store them in normal acid-free envelopes! Most high-quality, acid-free envelopes are heavily buffered with calcium carbonate, having a reserve one to three percent buffer of calcium carbonate.

Recently it has been shown that this buffer promotes the tarnishing of silver fixed in photographic emulsions. Moreover, envelopes in general are a poor storage medium for photographs. Pulling them out carelessly promotes mechanical damage, risks getting fingerprints on the emulsion, and the sliding back and forth scratches the surface of the photograph or negative.

Safer methods have developed: Store photographs in folders made of pH-neutral alfa-cellulose paper, which is acid-free, but not buffered. Also, there are polypropylene sleeves that are safe, and transparent, which is nice, because it allows you to see the image >

Orosz...

without removing it from storage.

Finally, a word of encouragement: While deterioration is unstoppable, it can be slowed to a crawl. After all, the Schoeffer incunable has been deteriorating since the moment half a millennium ago, when it was made; with luck, it still has a few millenia left.

The processes I've outlined will cost a little money, but even if you were to need them all, which is unlikely, you could buy all of the necessary equipment and supplies to carry out all of them for less than the cost of a fine copy of

Crosby's Early Coins of America.

Mainly, it'll take some of your time, but certainly not an oppressive amount. If you set one goal at a time and achieve that, the task will be reduced quickly to size.

But I'm not worried about you; any bibliophile worth his or her salt loves a book as an object, over and above its information content. I think that we understand, just as does an art collector, that we're only a temporary custodian, and that ownership carries with it the obligation to keep our books intact for future numismatic bibliomaniacs.

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..Do-it-Yourself				X		
Dust Jacket						
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Encapsulation						
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Lamination						
Supplies	X	.	X
Ultraviolet						
Filter Tubes . . . X	.	X	.	.	X	
pH Detector Pens		X	X	X	X	
Alfa Cellulose						
Paper X	.	X	.	X	.	X
Polypropylene						
Sleeves X	.	.	X	.	.	X

The First Word...

on the President's Message

Copies of the last issue of The Asylum were mailed to the following: Editor, Coin World + a letter; Numismatic Editor, World Coin News, + letter, plus a telephone call; Editor, Numismatic News; Editor, The Numismatist; ANA, and ANS Librarians.

Responses? Two! A pleasant letter from my friend at WCN, and a membership from the ANS Librarian.

Also, copies were mailed to: Bernardi, Dombrowski, Cayon, Calico, Spink, Van der Dussen, J. Schulman, Seaby, and selected dealers in the U.S. and Canada.

Results? Zero memberships!

Ironically, I've been on Krause Publications' payroll as a stringer for more than two years; I'm not an 'unknown' in Iola, Wisc.

During the 1985 FUN convention the present editor of Coin World asked for my help, which I gave freely; since then, two CW staff members have asked for help, and I gave, so I'm known there, also.

Whatever happened to the old 'backscratching' hypothesis? "You scratch mine, and I'll scratch yours." Seems that it has evolved into a one-way street, or creek, and I don't have a paddle!

But, why NO coverage in

ANY publication? I don't know, but maybe the editors will respond with valid reasons. Yes, I know that editors can't print everything they receive.

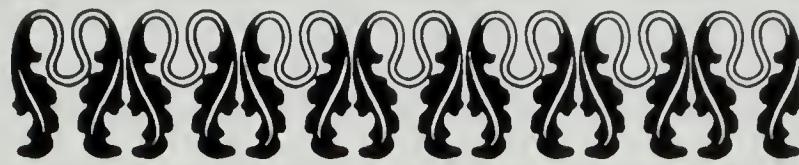
I'll point out, though, the trash commercials printed as editorial copy in the hobby publications, e.g., The Numismatist, where HRH Harris won't print ANYTHING about NBS! I suggest that all NBS-ANA members ask him why NBS can't get ANY coverage. Or, what have Mel Fisher or J.U. Blanchard ever done FOR the hobby? Anything? I'll listen.

(HRH appears to be one of a number of EMPLOYEES at ANA Hq who believe that we, collectors AND dealers, are working for them... NOT the other way around! The 'tail wags dog' syndrome.)

The tragedy is that those errant editors are hurting collectors who would gain from NBS membership; I know that I've gained valuable knowledge which I would NOT have learned from ANY commercial source. 'Course, maybe those same editors want to, "Keep 'em barefoot and illiterate!" to paraphrase an old maxim. Any wonder that memberships and subscriptions are falling so rapidly?

President Wilson is right; it IS a mystery why we have no more than 200 members out of the vast number of collectors and dealers in the world.

Summer, 1985



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